

# Simple ways to get better sleep



Lack of sleep can affect the body in many ways. Beyond just feeling tired, long-term sleep deprivation may be linked to health problems such as heart disease, obesity and depression. Try these tips to get better sleep each night:

- **Have a consistent schedule.** Get up at the same time each morning and go to bed at the same time each night. This will help to set your body's internal clock. Over time, you'll fall asleep quicker and may sleep better throughout the night.
- **Skip screens.** The light given off by smartphones, tablets and computers can actually keep you awake. Avoid electronics in the evening, at least 2 hours before bedtime.
- **Think about skipping naps.** Although a nap may feel great when you're tired, it could be causing more sleep problems. Napping can interfere with your sleep schedule and make you too alert at bedtime. If you have trouble falling asleep at night, skip the nap and get to bed a little sooner.
- **Get moving.** Exercise during the day has been shown to improve sleep quality. Walking, jogging, or any activity you enjoy can be helpful. Don't exercise within 2 hours of bedtime, though, if you have trouble falling asleep.
- **Be careful about caffeine.** That afternoon cup of coffee could still be in your system at bedtime, making it difficult to fall asleep. Try to avoid soda, tea and coffee after lunch.
- **Don't smoke.** Nicotine interferes with sleep and harms your health in many other ways. If you need help quitting, talk to your doctor or visit [smokefree.gov](http://smokefree.gov) for free help with quitting. It's never too late to quit.
- **Don't eat a big meal before bed.** Heavy meals can interfere with sleep and make you restless. Eat dinner about 2 to 3 hours before bedtime. If you need a snack, make it small and light, such as yogurt and fruit or a handful of nuts.

Source: National Sleep Foundation